

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 120747
ORIGIN TRSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 EB-08 CTME-00 COME-00 ICA-20
H-02 /043 R

DRAFTED BY TREASURY:FAC:GFHAZARD:DLM
APPROVED BY EB/ITP/EWT:PHBLAKEBURN
EA/TIMBS:LLROCKE

-----079061 121135Z /15

R 112159Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

UNCLAS STATE 120747

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: ESTC, EFIN, CB

SUBJECT: IMPORTATION OF CAMBODIAN ART OBJECTS

1. TREASURY IS EXAMINING ITS LICENSING POLICY CONCERNING THE IMPORTATION FROM THAILAND OF TOURIST PURCHASES (NONCOMMERCIAL LOTS) OF CERAMIC, METAL, STONE AND OTHER ART OBJECTS WHICH ORIGINATED IN CAMBODIA.

2. AS EMBASSY KNOWS, GOODS OF CAMBODIAN ORIGIN EXPORTED FROM CAMBODIA SUBSEQUENT TO APRIL 17, 1978 ARE SUBJECT TO THE PROHIBITIONS OF THE TREASURY'S FOREIGN ASSETS CONTROL REGULATIONS, AND GENERALLY ARE NOT LICENSED FOR IMPORT INTO THE U.S. TREASURY UNDERSTANDS THAT THERE EXISTS IN THAILAND A SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITY OF CAMBODIAN (KHMER) ART OBJECTS WHICH WERE IMPORTED FROM CAMBODIA PRIOR TO 1975. SUCH MERCHANDISE IS LICENSED FOR IMPORT INTO THE U.S. UPON SUB-
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MISSION OF PROOF THAT ITS IMPORT INTO THAILAND ANTEDATED DESIGNATION OF CAMBODIA IN APRIL, 1975 AND THAT THERE IS NO CURRENT CAMBODIAN INTEREST THEREIN AS OWNER, CONSIGNOR OR OTHERWISE. A HIGH STANDARD OF PROOF IS REQUIRED, SUCH AS THE SUBMITTAL OF INSURANCE DOCUMENTS, MUSEUM CATALOGS, ETC.

3. AVAILABLE REPORTS STATE THAT THE BORDER BETWEEN

THAILAND AND CAMBODIA HAS BEEN CLOSED SINCE 1975 AND THE ONLY CAMBODIAN ART OBJECTS (OR OTHER GOODS) CURRENTLY

REACHING THAILAND HAVE BEEN SMUGGLED FROM CAMBODIA WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THE CAMBODIAN AUTHORITIES. IF SO, THERE WOULD THEORETICALLY BE LITTLE RISK THAT CAMBODIAN ART OBJECTS PURCHASED IN THAILAND WOULD HAVE EARNED FOREIGN EXCHANGE FOR PERSONS IN CAMBODIA AFTER APRIL 17, 1975.

4. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO ASCERTAIN AND REPORT THE VOLUME OF CAMBODIAN ART OBJECTS IMPORTED INTO THAILAND SINCE APRIL 1975, GIVING YEARLY DOLLAR AMOUNTS; A BREAKDOWN BY CATEGORY, SUCH AS CERAMICS, METAL OBJECTS, ETC.; AND ESTIMATES OF VOLUME OF SMUGGLED GOODS.

5. IN VIEW OF CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN A CURRENT CASE EARLY REPLY IS REQUESTED. VANCE

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